

**TOWN OF SHEFFIELD
BOARD OF SELECTMEN &
SHEFFIELD MEMBERS OF SBRSD SCHOOL COMMITTEE
OCTOBER 1, 2007
SELECTMEN'S MEETING ROOM
6:00 PM**

Board Members Present: Julie M. Hannum, Chairman
James T. Collingwood Sr., Clerk
David D. Macy

School Comm. Members Present: Jack Pollitt
Dek Tillett
David Steindler
Susan Young

Other Staff Present: Joseph A. Kellogg, Interim Town Administrator

Chairman Hannum called the meeting to order at 6:00 pm.

Discussion ensued regarding holding meetings with the Board of Selectmen and the Sheffield members of the SBRSD School Committee once a month.

The School Committee sent a letter to Jeff Wulfson at the Department of Education asking what happens if the State takes over the School District. Mr. Wulfson has also been invited to attend a School Committee meeting to discuss this matter.

Discussion ensued regarding lowering the school budget to what each town has already voted. David Steindler has asked the School Superintendent to provide the lower numbers in the event that the budget can be lowered. Discussion ensued regarding the effects of a budget cut.

Discussion ensued regarding the member towns. All have appropriated funds but not on the statutory method of assessment.

Discussion ensued regarding per pupil costs, the cost of operating the smaller schools in the district and voluntarily closing the smaller schools.

Discussion ensued regarding school choice costs and if the District can stop participation in school choice.

Discussion ensued regarding communication between the Town and District. There was no communication between the District and Town Administrator during the budget process and this has contributed to the budget problems.

Discussion ensued regarding the assessment methods. The law states that each town should have put the choice between the statutory and alternative method on their annual town meeting warrant. Sheffield was the only town to do so.

A mediation meeting will be held on October 25, 2007 at 5:00 pm at Berkshire South Regional Community Center with the Boards of Selectmen from Sheffield, Monterey, New Marlborough, Egremont and Alford. The State Office of Dispute Resolution will conduct the meeting, which was set up by Representative Pignatelli,

Discussion ensued regarding the School Committee members from each town being aware of what their town can afford. It is important for School Committees, Selectmen and Finance Committee members to keep communication open.

Discussion ensued regarding the union contract for the District. It is increasing and is becoming unaffordable for the towns. This should be an issue for discussion during the meetings to set the FY09 budget.

Discussion ensued regarding the procedure for a town to withdraw from the District.

Selectman Macy noted that Sheffield has been over assessed for years and we provide police and fire protection along with road maintenance for the District.

The School Committee will meet on October 11, 2007, which is two days after New Marlborough votes on the assessment method. The Selectmen will be notified if Mr. Wulfson will be present at that meeting.

Discussion ensued regarding pothole funding from the Commonwealth. Four towns received funding towards the school budget.

Discussion ensued regarding whether Sheffield needs to vote again if the school budget changes and the need to vote annually for the assessment method.

Discussion ensued regarding cost of programs and their effect on the budget, tuition rates for children attending the District, the number of children that have left the District, and combining programs and sports with surrounding towns.

Chairman Hannum adjourned the meeting at 7:55 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Rhonda LaBombard
Assistant Town Administrator